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学　位　论　文

Chinglish:

An Analysis of Cross-linguistic and Cross-cultural Influence in Translation

汉式英语：翻译中的跨语际跨文化影响

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CONTENTS

Part One Introduction

1. Motivation

English is now establishing itself as an international language. In China it is gaining increasing importance as a predominant medium to communicate with the West. Translation, an activity that aims at conveying meaning or meanings of a given-linguistic discourse from one language to another, undoubtedly, plays an important role in this cross-linguistic and cross-cultural communication. The past decade has witnessed an unprecedented development of Chinese economy, featured by the rising of international trade, its accession into the globalization process, increased migration, and the expansion of the mass media and technology. This has brought about the proliferation of translation practice. Some new distinctive features have emerged in this profession:

a. Literary translation gives way to technical translation

Most of the translation jobs being done today are technical and practical, quite different from those at the time when most scholars engaged themselves in the translation of Chinese literature in the early and mid 19th century. Technical translation puts higher requirements on translation quality.

b. An increasing demand of translation into the second language

Market requirements are increasingly demanding that translators transfer texts to a target language that is not their mother tongue, but a foreign language. This is what Newmark calls "service translation". Everyday documents of various kinds need to be translated into English for commercial, diplomatic, educational, and other reasons. Now in China bilingualism can be seen everywhere in public places from official signs on roads and buildings, to menus in restaurants.

In the field of translation, translating into the mother tongue is the preferred mode of working. The preference is easy to understand, since in translation the most important thing is to produce idiomatic target language which can only be done if the translator is a native or near-native speaker of the TL. However, in the translation market, native speaker of English falls short of demand. Most translations into the second language (L2) are actually done by learners of English as the L2. Being a learner of a second language means that the language produced by such a person is always a kind of "interlanguage"(Selinker: 1969), which is on evolutionary path to the norms of that language. One of the aspects of the interlanguage is the error caused by the first language (L1) transfer. Advanced learners of English may not make overt grammatical mistakes, but they can not be immune from L1 interference. Their translations, although English in form, contain distinctive features of the Chinese language, either in grammatical, textual or pragmatic aspects. Chinglish is the term to describe such translations.

Unlike manufactured products which should be subject to the inspection of the quality control department, there has never been a particular organization to exercise control upon

the quality of the translation product. With the expansion of the translation market, poor translations flood into the market. A lot of Chinglish can be seen everywhere in public places, including bars, restaurants, shops, road signs and public notice, as well as company introduction, promotion literature, official documents, etc. The followings are just a few examples:

The wine leaves nothing to hope for. (an advertisement);
Protect a piece of green leaf and dedicate a share of love. (a public notice);
Please pay attention to the sanitation. (a sign);
All T-shirts are handmade and will not fade no matter how you wash it. (a business brochure).

To foreigners, these translations are either amusing or confusing, expressing unique perspective of the Chinese world-view. More and more people begin to realize the seriousness of this problem and negative effect it has on other people's view of China. Bejing has recently launched a campaign to eradicate Chinglish displayed in public places. In this campaign, lots of native speakers of English are used to proof-read English translations. Another method to avoid Chinglish is to help translators identify Chinglish by themselves. This paper intends to do a research on Chinglish, particularly describing those areas where negative transfer of the L1 may likely take place.

2. Terminology

To make the research area clearer, some terms need to be explained first.

2.1 Language transfer

Language contact situations arise whenever there is a meeting of speakers who do not all share the same language and who need to communicate. When the communicative needs of people go beyond what gestures and other paralinguistic signals can achieve, some use of a second language becomes necessary. The languages learned in contact situations may or may not show some kind of language mixing, that is, the merging of characteristics of two or more languages in any verbal communication. If mixing does occur, native language influence is the only one of the possible forms it can take. Another kind of mixing is in the form of borrowings from a second language into the native language. And still another kind is code-switch, in which there is a systematic interchange of words, phrases, and sentences of two or more languages.

In the 19th and 20th century, scholarship on language contact in general has increased considerably and with that increase has come much evidence of cross-linguistic influence. It should be noted that Weinreich (1953) used the term interference to cover any case of transfer. Nevertheless, his survey of bilingualism shows that the effects of cross-linguistic influence are not monolithic but instead vary considerably according to the social context of the language contact situation. These effects can often be distinguished through the use

of the terms **borrowing transfer** or **substratum transfer** (Odlin 2001: 12):

> **Borrowing transfer** refers to the influence of a second language on a previously acquired language.
> **Substratum transfer** is the type of cross-linguistic influence confining the influence of the native language on the acquisition of a second language.

As this paper intends to do a research on how first language may interfere in the process of translation, the term *transfer* will hereafter serve as an abbreviation for substratum transfer.

2.2 Pidgin English, Chinglish and China English

2.2.1 Pidgin English

Contact between the English and Chinese languages dates from the establishment of a British trading post in 1640 in Guangzhou. In the dealings between Europeans and Chinese merchants, contacts were limited and the trade jargons used had only the status of "marginal languages", which are usually called pidgins. It is a kind of English consisting principally of mispronounced English words mixed with certain native grammatical constructions. This is Pidgin English. The best-known feature is the absence of inflection, as Chinese languages use particles rather than inflection to denote aspects. Less well known is the use of adjectives and verbs as subjects. Actually, it comes from the fact that Chinese sentences are of the topic-comment type, and the topic can be any content word. An example from its heyday is: *Tailor, my have got one piece plenty hansom silk; my want you make one nice evening dress*. Pidgin spread because of an eagerness to communicate and do trade with foreigners and also of the fact that most of people could not receive a systematic education of the English language. Nevertheless, it declined towards the end of the 19th century as standard English began to be systematically taught in schools and universities.

2.2.2 Chinglish

Chinglish is also a mixture of Chinese and English. Compared with Pidgin English which is largely ungrammatical, Chinglish is grammatical but not idiomatic and sometimes totally nonsense. They appear to be grammatical in form but unreasonable and illogical in sense.

However, to define that Chinglish is a mixture of Chinese and English will be of little value for current exploration, as this definition is too broad to make explicit its nature, its characteristics and its scope. Before the definition of Chinglish is presented, some observations are made about what Chinglish is.

Firstly, Chinglish is non-standard English produced by Chinese who learns English as

second language. In foreigners' eyes, Chinglish is peculiar, unnatural and unacceptable. To say it non-standard means that the utterances deviate from standard or habitual use of the target language. Standard use of a language should be in strict conformity with the norms of that language. According to Rod Ellis, "an error is a deviation from the norms of the target language" (1999:51). In this sense, Chinglish are in nature errors, produced by Chinese L2 learners. Nevertheless, not all errors made by Chinese L2 learners are Chinglish.

Secondly, Chinglish usually carries the characteristics unique to the mother tongue. Although they take the form in English, they show mother tongue interference at syntactic, semantic, textual and pragmatic levels. In the study of SLA, interference is often associated with the terms 'first language transfer' or 'cross-linguistic influence'. It is regarded as a major type of error in learners' language. From the translation's perspective, interference from the source language is usually labeled 'tranlationese', meaning more or less bad translation where the structure of the source language is transferred to the target language. The translated texts marked by the characteristics of the mother tongue may on some occasions contain grammatical errors, but on most occasions they are grammatical but inappropriate and illogical.

Thirdly, errors contained in Chinglish are somewhat 'covert'. Those who can take up the job of translation must reach at least intermediate or advanced level of English. And apparently, these people do not bluntly violate the grammatical rules of the TL. Corder (1973: 272) made a distinction between overt errors and covert errors. As he explains, an overt error is a clear deviation in form as in the sentence 'my three sisters are older than me'. Whereas a covert error is superficially well-formed but does not mean what the translator intended them to mean. For instance, a translated notice 'Wanted: Laid-off workers to take care of babies that do not have unfavorable habits', is superficially grammatical until it becomes clear that it is 'laid-off workers' who should not have unfavorable habits instead of babies. This sentence is still regarded as erroneous, as it betrays the writer's intention.

Up to now, we can define Chinglish as deviations from the norms of the target language, which are caused by mother tongue interference. This definition immediately raises the question which variety of the target language should serve as the norm, or put it in another perspective, what are measures of deviancies. Generally speaking, deviancies can be measured in two major aspects: grammaticality and acceptability.

a. Grammaticality

Grammaticality is synonymous with 'well-formedness'. The main problem with using grammaticality as a reference point is that different grammars will register different decisions concerning borderline cases. On the clear-cut cases, there will no such inconsistencies. These clear-cut cases we can confidently refer to as the 'code' or the 'core grammar' (James 1998: 66). Thus we agree with Corder that ungrammaticality involves 'breaches of rules of the code' (1981: 14). In the case of the notice (seeking a 'baby-sitter')

mentioned above, the notice is still regarded as erroneous in terms of grammaticality, as it violates the rule that the relative clause should be placed close to its antecedent. However, when we come to the issues of semantic and collocational anomalies as in 'The milk turned rotten', we can not label them as cases of ungrammaticality, as the rules they violate are not general rules of grammar, but 'local' and sometimes even unique rules determining what word combinations are natural. In order to escape this dilemma, we may broader the term 'grammar' to include not only syntactic well-formedness but also semantic well-formedness.

b. Acceptability

If grammaticality examines deviations in correctness, acceptability examines deviations in appropriateness. The former involves rules of usage, and the latter rules of language use. Grammaticality is a prerequisite of acceptability. In other words, there can be no acceptability without grammaticality. Unacceptability arises when non-linguistic factors militate against the use of a form. De facto use and unproblematicity are the tests for establishing acceptability (Carl James 1998:67).

To decide on the acceptability of a piece of language we refer not to rules, but to contexts, trying to contextualize the utterance in question. Lenon made similar comment: 'Most erroneous forms are in fact, in themselves not erroneous at all, but become erroneous only in the context of the larger linguistic units in which they occur'(1991:189). There is nothing intrinsically wrong with the sign 'Welcome to Xiamen', but it is wrong when the sign is put on the road where the visitors are leaving the city. 'Welcome' is a greeting used on arrival, not on departure. Lenon's point refers to the accompanying linguistic context, or cotext of a possible error. In other words, whether an utterance is appropriate depends on its situational context.

Whether some text is acceptable will depend on its naturalness, its fluency, its idiomaticity, its appropriacy. All these are aspects of texts which apparently one has to be a native speaker to pass judgment about. Generally speaking, what makes especially advanced L2 learners' language odd or strange or foreign is its tendency to be unacceptable while being grammatical. For instance, the utterance 'before you cross the road, look' is unacceptable, because it disappoints the target readers' expectation of idiomaticity. Nor can a text be declared acceptable solely on the grounds that it is intelligible, because the sense that the receiver extracts from it might not correspond to that which its producer intended. Here is another example. A Chinese boy greeted his colleague, a girl from America, "Have you had your lunch." This utterance serves as a phatic function among Chinese, but is misinterpreted as an invitation to lunch by the American girl. We shall say that language that has these sorts of characteristics exhibits a certain strangeness (Bridges 1990). Such strangeness is one of the ways that a learner's language can be infelicitous.

By this definition, we do not intend to lump all the interference errors made by Chinese L2 learners of English into the category of current research. In this paper we will focus on Chinglish present in translation, particularly those translations done by learners who have

reached at least intermediate or advanced level of English.

2.2.3 China English

While Chinglish is negative, China English is positive, a term to describe expressions distinctive of Chinese occurrences, such as 'one China two systems', 'three links', 'three representatives', 'modernization drive' and so on. These expressions can only be understood by those who have some Chinese cultural and social background knowledge. With China's playing an increasing role in the international arena, these expressions have been gradually accepted and assimilated into the English language. This term is introduced to distinguish Chinglish from China English, to make current research scope clearer.

3. Purpose and approach

Given an array of Chinglish displayed almost everywhere in public place, the natural questions arise is why Chinglish occurs and how to avoid it, the latter being most important. Many people write or speak Chinglish without being aware of the fact that they are still using the first language as the reference for L2 production. We may be quite familiar with the saying that 'when speaking English, think in English'. However, it is easier to say than do. Being a second language translator, he or she is still acquiring that language. When the translation task or communication requires what is not available in the learner's knowledge of L2, the leaner may fall back on his mother tongue for expression. This is negative transfer from the first language. As this paper is targeted at intermediate and advanced learners of English, we will primarily focus on those areas of cross-linguistic and cross-cultural influence where L2 translators are more likely subject to. But we will still avail ourselves of L1 transfer theory to explain how first language influence second language production.

On the other hand, Chinglish is largely the outcome of literal translation from the source text. We may have the experience that the same text written by a Chinese EFL learner is perceived very differently by Chinese and English native speakers, from a logical coherent text for the former, to an incoherent one for the latter. This implies that different rules, distinctive of respective language and culture, are applied to assess the text. The source text produced by a Chinese writer is usually targeted at the Chinese readers. The writer would naturally take into account the presumed interests, expectations, knowledge and situational constrains of the source-culture readers. However, these interests, expectations, knowledge may not be equally shared by the target readers. Thus a so-called 'faithful' translation of the source text may make the version sound 'foreign' or 'unnatural' to the target readers. A functional perspective of translation, that lay emphasis on the purpose of translation, will show a way out of this dilemma.

This paper intends to fuse second language acquisition with translation studies to explore the Chinglish problem. The converging point of these two issues lies in the fact that both deals with two languages in the same mind. How to keep two languages apart and produce

idiomatic target language is the common interest of these two research areas. Contrastive analysis is one possible route towards this aim to help L2 translators become aware of where and when their discourse is affected by cross-linguistic influence. Cross-language communication analysis cannot rely on linguistics alone, since it works with similarities and differences in human verbal and non-verbal codes and with the clash of the two codes in the language-behavior of a foreign language learner. A broader definition of CA that considers cognitive and sociocultural variables of language production in addition to linguistic variable has been substituted for a purely linguistic framework interested in structural analyses of products. This sets CA in a wider framework for the analysis of cross-linguistic & cultural influence.

Based on the framework of SLA theory and translation studies, complemented with contrastive analysis, this paper will devote itself to the analysis of negative transfer at lexical, syntactical, textual and pragmatic level, with an attempt to help L2 translators identify those areas where they most likely transfer the usage of mother tongue into the target language. Besides contrasting the linguistic systems of Chinese and English, this paper will also draw out the analysis and description of pragmatics patterning, cognitive mechanisms, perception, and information-processing systems in man to shed light on negative transfers in L2 translation.

4. Organization of the thesis

While this part introduces and motivates the current research, the rest of the thesis will expand on the ideas explained in this part.

Part two will lay the theoretical groundwork for the exploration of Chinglish in the wider context of SLA theory and translation studies. The main questions I ask here is why Chinglish occurs and how Chinglish can be analyzed. The first question will be approached from the perspective of SLA theory, particularly the psychotypological mechanism of first language transfer, as well as the functional perspective of translation. Contrastive analysis will then be demonstrated to be effective in analyzing Chinglish.

Part three will draw an empirical analysis of Chinglish based on the theoretical framework laid down in part two. Chinglish will be analyzed following the hierarchy of descriptive units from lexis, syntax to text and pragmatic.

Part four will conclude the thesis and enlist educational implications for L2 translators.

Part Two A Theoretical Framework for the Analysis of Chinglish

Translating into the first language is quite different from translating into the second language. Chinglish should be examined within the framework of translation into the second language. However, the problems arising out of translation into the second language do not fit easily into the framework established by orthodox translation studies, which tend to assume that all translators are "ideal" bilingual speakers. Rather, they relate to two key issues. One is the issue of the Second Language Acquisition. In many cases, an individual translating into a second language (L2) is still acquiring that language, so that it makes sense to think of learning to translate as a special variety of learning a second language. In fact many of the translation studies have ignored the issue of language development, tacitly assuming the existence of a perfectly bilingual translator. In Selinker's term (1969), linguistic output of a second language learner is a kind of interlanguage which approximates to the norms of the L2. The output of a second language translator can be thought of as a special variety of interlanguage that is framed by the demands of the task of translation. In this sense Chinglish is also interlanguage which bears the characteristic of first language transfer. L1 transfer was previously identified as the major factor causing errors in L2 production. Although it has been found that not all errors in learners' language are due to mother tongue interference (some errors reflect universal learning strategy and are called developmental errors), interference error remains the key type of errors in L2 production and has been constantly studied based on contrastive analysis. Interference errors are particularly evident in translation when translators are compelled by the translation task to produce a target text equal to the original one. A cognitive perspective based on kellerman's model of psychotypology will help explain why transfer occurs in language production. The other issue concerns the approach to translation. There are three new distinctive perspectives on translation theory. One is to view translation as an act of communication, instead of a process of trans-coding; the other is to orient translation towards cultural rather than linguistic transfer; and the third perspective is that the function of the target text rather than prescriptions of the source text should be emphasized. Based on these conceptions of translation, functional translation reigns supreme above interlineal, literal, and word-for-word translation. Chinglish, presenting itself as a mixing of Chinese and English arises out of direct transfer from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL). These three new perspectives will give us an insightful way of looking at the 'foreignness' and 'unnaturalness' of Chinglish. These two issues converge on the point that they both deal with two languages in the same mind. Contrastive analysis, which has been incessantly adopted to account for transfer errors in SLA, proves to be also useful in explaining translation errors. In this part we will first draw a detailed discussion of the two issues mentioned above and then relate contrastive analysis with translation to see how contrastive analysis can be applied in explaining Chinglish.

1. Translators as second language learners

Translation theorists tend to assume that all translators are perfect bilinguals and work from the foreign language into their mother tongue. In reality, few people have the opportunity to develop a simultaneous bilinguality and on most occasions translators are required to translate into the L2. Most bilinguals have acquired a second language after their first language, more often than not through educational programs introduced at different age-levels, which will not necessarily lead to a balanced bilinguality. In this case in translating into the L2, the linguistic output of second language translators is always a kind of 'interlanguage', containing deviations from the norms of the target language.

1.1 Translation into the second language

For most language learners, language production is more difficult to manage than language comprehension. Swain (1985) notes that, in methodologies which emphasize comprehensible input, it is possible for a second language (L2) learner to comprehend input without a syntactic analysis, but such learners often produce only limited utterances, because comprehensible output cannot be generated without syntactic analysis, which the learner has little expertise in. More specifically, when learning to read and write in L2, it is relatively easy to comprehend a text in L2 as long as the learner has the correct aids and tools. However, when it comes to write in L2, although the discourse produced by the learner may be comprehensible, few learners achieve the native-like proficiency in terms of writing.

This perspective is also projected in the field of translation. Most translation theorists agree that translation is understood as a transfer process from a foreign language—or a second language—to the mother tongue. For example, Nida and Taber (1969), include an appendix on 'Organization of Translation Projects' where Bible translators are advised how to establish project teams. It is suggested, for instance, that 'the native speakers in such cases are recognized as the real translators, while the foreigners who participate are exegetical informants and assistants' (Nida and Taber: 1969). This was no doubt a radical statement but it suggested that idiomatic target text can only be produced by the native speakers of the target language. Newmark also makes the comment:

> I shall assume that you, the reader, are learning to translate into your language of habitual use, since that is the only way you can translate naturally, accurately and with maximum effectiveness. (2001:3)

That is why most translation practitioners prefer to translate into the L1. When translating from L2 into his mother tongue, the learner can resort to a variety of resources like dictionaries and encyclopaedias in comprehending a difficult source text. Thus, language comprehension poses no substantive problems, and language production is also easy to handle as translators are themselves native speakers of the target language. Wilss comments:

> A translator normally translates form a foreign language into his mother tongue, the

> explanation being that, at least in cases of compound bilingualism, **native-tongue competence is more powerfully internalized than foreign-language competence.** Hence, a translator can analyze and adequately eliminate translation difficulty only in the field of L2/L1 transfer. (2001:161)

There is significant disadvantage which makes translation into the second language even more difficult than plainly communicating in the second language. In the translation, second language translators is further restricted by the source language text and cannot adopt the 'avoidance' strategy which is available in speaking and writing, where the learner can choose the expressions he has confidence in and avoid uncertain expressions. By being given a set of source text in translation however, the 'raw materials' are fixed, so to speak, and the translator's task is to 'match' rather than to 'choose'. And if there are no internalized materials, i.e. expressions in the target language in the learner's head to represent the source text, then the translation may be doomed to fail miserably.

For someone who is himself a learner of second language, translation into the second language is always deficient, be it in grammatical, textual or pragmatic aspects.

1.2 Interlanguage

When translating into the L2, a learner's linguistic output is always a kind of 'interlanguge', that is, the learner's knowledge of the L2 is independent of both the L1 and the actual L2. The term 'interlangage was first used by Selinker in 1972. He suggested that an interlanguage is a separate linguistic system resulting from the learners' attempt to produce the target language. For him interlanguage is an intermediate system composed of rules built on different strategies, e.g. simplification, overgeneralization and transfer. It is a series of approximative system which evolve and resemble more and more the system used by native speakers.

Selinker noted that many L2 learners (perhaps as many as 95 percent) fail to reach target language competence. They stop learning when their interlanguage contains at least some rules different from those of the target language system. He referred to this as fossilization. The fossilized system is intermediate between L1 and the target language. The rules used in this interlanguage stem from three different sources: mother tongue, acquired knowledge of target language, and cognitive processes of L2 learning (Selinker: 1972). Therefore, the errors produced are caused partly by developmental processes, partly by an incomplete knowledge of L2 rules, and partly by L1 transfer.

Chinglish, in nature is an interlanguage, marked by those errors caused by L1 transfer. Indeed, Chinglish discussed in this paper is not carried out by rank beginners in the second language, but by those with substantial competence in the language; what translation challenges is their ability to produce stylistically authentic text. Transfer errors made by those who have reached medium or advanced level of English are quite different from those made by beginning learners. We do not intend to compare the differences of these

errors. What we are interested is how and in what areas transfer likely occurs.

1.3 Language transfer

One of the starting points in investigating SLA has been the proposition that L2 learners already possess knowledge of a first knowledge. This proposition naturally raises the theoretical concern: What is the relationship between L1 and L2? Transfer is one of the words that are used to capture this relationship. However, as the term 'transfer' is always associated with behaviorist view of habit-formation, other alternative terms have been proposed to indicate this relationship. Sharwood Smith and Kellerman (1986) argued that cross-linguistic influence is a superordinate term that is more neutral in theoretical terms. They comment:

> …the term 'corsslinguistic influence'… is theory-neutral, allowing one to subsume under one heading such phenomena as 'transfer', 'interference', 'avoidance', 'borrowing' and L2-related aspects of language loss and permitting discussion of the similarities and differences between these phenomena (1986: 1).

Nevertheless, the term 'transfer' has been persistently used, and its definition has now been considerably broadened to include most of the cross-linguistic phenomena. A neutral definition is presented by Odlin:

> Transfer is the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously acquired. (1989:27)

There has been an abundant research in L1 transfer in SLA, but the topic is always a controversial one. We will, in this section, first look into the evolution of the notion of L1 transfer, and then draw on Knellman's model of psychotypology to explain how L1 transfer affects translation.

1.3.1 A historical perspective on the notion of language transfer

This will involve tracing is origins in behaviorist learning theory, its development in terms of the Contrastive Analysis hypothesis, and the theoretical and empirical attack on the hypothesis which followed. This section will follow these developments, reflecting the historical shifts of direction that have taken place over the last forty years or so. It will conclude with an account of the current reappraisal of "interference" which once again seeks to allocate an important role of the L1 in SLA.

1.3.1.1 Behaviorist View

Earlier thinking of the L1 role in SLA was based largely in a behaviorist paradigm. According to the behaviourists, all learning, whether verbal or non-verbal, takes place through the underlying process of habit formation. It is assumed that a person learning a

second language starts off with the old habits associated with the first language. The old habits get in the way and interfere with the learning of new habits. Interference, in behaviorist's account, is the result of **proactive inhibition**, that is, previous learning prevents or inhibits the learning of new habits. Ellis explains behaviorist view in the following:

> Where the first and second language share a meaning but express it in different ways, the learner will transfer the realization device from his first language into the second and an error is likely to arise in the L2. … Thus, the process of SLA is characterized as that of overcoming the effects of L1, of slowly replacing the features of the L1 that intrude into the L2 with those of the target language and so of approximating ever closer to native-speaker speech. (Rod Ellis 1999: 22)

1.3.1.2 Growth of Contrastive Analysis

According to behaviorist learning theory, errors could be avoided by comparing the learner's native language with the target language. This initiated the study of contrastive analysis. The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH), originally developed by Fries (1945) and expanded by Lado (1957) claimed that linguistic difference between a learner's L1 and the target language (L2) led to error as a result of learning difficulty. Therefore, it was assumed that the role of the L1 in the SLA process was a 'negative' one. In the foreword to *Linguistics Across Cultures*, a highly influential manual on contrastive analysis by Lado(1957), Fries stated:

> Learning a second language ⋯ constitutes a very different task from learning the first language. The basic problems arise not out of any essential difficulty in the features of the new language themselves but primarily out of the special "set" created by the first language habits. (1957: Foreword)

Being grounded in behaviourism, Contrastive Analysis was dedicated to a detailed comparison of the similarities and differences between the first language and the target language, assuming that second language acquisition is easy where the target language is similar to the first language, but difficult where the two are dissimilar. In the case of similar patterns, so-called 'positive transfer' was thought to facilitate second language acquisition, whereas different patterns were predicted to cause 'negative transfer' errors, as a result of interference of wrong habits from the first language. It was then suggested in pedagogy that what there is to teach can best be found by comparing the two languages and then subtracting what is common to them, so that "what the student has to learn equals the sum of differences established by the contrastive analysis" (Lado 1957). In this way, Contrastive Analysis researchers attempted to predict which errors could be expected from second language learners of different language backgrounds. However, the simplistic and restricted Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis was refuted by empirical findings. The findings showed, on the one hand, that many of the predicted errors did not occur and, on the other hand, that many of the occurring errors could not be explained on the basis of L1 transfer.

1.3.1.3 Criticism of Contrastive Analysis

The notion of transfer as a crucial theoretical construct of second language acquisition theories temporarily lost ground altogether as a result of the demise of the behaviorist view of language acquisition: transfer was intimately associated with Contrastive Analysis and hence with Behaviorism. Habit-formation theories of language acquisition had become untenable after Chomsky's (1959) acquisition arguments in his critical review of Skinner's (1957) *Verbal Behavior*. Consequently, the behaviourist perspective on language acquisition was supplanted by a mentalist perspective on language acquisition. The central role of transfer in SLA theories was replaced by the view that L2 learners followed similar developmental paths, regardless of their L1.

The best-known studies that played down the role of the L1 by emphasizing similar acquisition orders for L2 learners with different L1s were based on morpheme-order. The highly influential study by Dulay and Burt (1974) found similar accuracy orders of English grammatical morphemes for both Spanish and Chinese child L2 learners of English. These results were confirmed by the results of replication studies investigating adult L2 learners of English from a wider variety of language-backgrounds (Bailey, Madden and Krashen 1974). In the interpretation of the results, it was stressed that these SLA studies resembled L1 acquisition studies that had found similar acquisition orders of grammatical morphemes in children acquiring English as their native language (Brown 1973, De Villiers 1973). This was taken as compelling evidence for the position that L2 development is similar to L1 development. Not surprisingly, this unitary theory of L1 acquisition and L2 acquisition left no room for L1 transfer effects in L2A. (Sauter 2002: 3)

The morpheme-order studies have been much criticized on both conceptual and methodological grounds (for overview of this criticism cf. Ellis (1994); Gass and Selinker (1994)). For example, the description of developmental sequences in itself offered no *explanation* for what were thought of as universal orders. As it turned out, the pivotal role of learner-internal "universal cognitive mechanisms" (Dulay and Burt, 1974) was challenged by the role of external factors like input: accuracy orders were found to be largely determined by frequency effects of morphemes in the input (Larsen-Freeman 1976; Snow et al. 1980). Moreover, cross-sectional morpheme-order studies like the one by Dulay and Burt (1974) have also been criticized for seriously underestimating the role of L1 transfer. Their morpheme orders did not match those of several longitudinal studies that followed the individual development of L2 learners (Hakuta 1974; Rosansky 1976; Schmidt 1983). The latter studies found that L2 learners with similar language backgrounds followed similar developmental orders, suggesting that the L1 does affect L2 acquisition. (Sauter 2002: 3)

1.3.1.4 Reappraisal of language transfer

The behaviorist Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis and the universalist position advocated